

Go Green Galloway

Green tip of the week:

Eco-friendly lawn care

Many lawns may look wonderful and green, but a lot of lawns are actually not very “green”. A large number of homeowners use quite a few toxic chemicals on their lawns. When it rains, pesticides are flushed into streams, rivers, lakes, harming fish and plants along the way. Here are some tips to make sure your grass looks great and is safe for pets, children, and other living things.

- Choose the right mower: There are many low-energy, high quality alternatives to pollution causing gas mowers. Rotary mowers are making a comeback. They maneuver very easily, have low maintenance costs, and have a minimal environmental impact. Electric mowers emit fewer pollutants than gas-powered machines, are much quieter, and often easier to operate than gas mowers.
- Mowing and Fertilizing: Mow only as often as you need. Cut lawn no lower than 2 1/2". Longer grass retains water better and helps crowd out weeds. Use natural fertilizers and compost. They release nutrients slowly throughout the year, won't leach away, and support the variety of soil organisms that combat disease. Seek out lawn companies that support natural practices. Leave grass clippings on the lawn after you mow to provide your lawn with a natural source of nutrients. You can also compost the clippings.
- Use less water: Lawns are very labor and water intensive to maintain. A large portion of a homeowner's water usage is used for landscaping. The best way to conserve water is to reduce the amount of landscaping required to maintain your yard. Consider reducing lawn size and replace your lawn with low-maintenance groundcovers and/or native plant gardens. Water deeply, but infrequently. Frequent shallow watering causes poor root development. Overwatering also promotes lawn disease. Water early in the morning when temperatures are cooler to minimize evaporation. Check your sprinkler system regularly and make sure you are only watering your lawn and not the house, sidewalk, or street. Collect and use rainwater for watering your garden with a rain barrel.

Go Green Galloway Outreach Correspondent

Daina Walters

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Green tip of the week:

Make Earth Day Every Day at Home

There are many ways you can make everyday Earth Day at home. By doing some little things at home you can make a difference in helping the planet.

- Reduce paper use. Use rags instead of paper towels and cloth napkins instead of paper ones. Buy post-consumer recycled paper products and then recycle it after you use it.
- Refurbish responsibly. Use water-based or vegetable-based paints, stains, or varnishes. Don't wash paint thinners or oils down the drain or on the ground. Dispose of them responsibly at your local toxic waste disposal center.
- Purchase and use non-toxic cleaning products. Use cleaning agents that are biodegradable, phosphate-free, chlorine-free and unscented. You can make many effective natural cleaners with liquid castile soap, vinegar, and essential oils.
- Replace disposable goods with renewable ones. Buy rechargeable batteries. Use dishes instead of paper plates. Use glasses instead of plastic cups. Use reusable containers for food instead of plastic sandwich bags. Use reusable water bottles instead of plastic water bottles.
- Repair instead of replace. Reupholster furniture. Repair and repaint old furniture. Resole your shoes.

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Green tip of the week:

Treat seasonal allergies naturally

Spring is here and the trees and flowers are blooming. Allergy sufferers are beginning to sneeze, cough, and experience watery, itchy eyes. Most allergy symptoms show up as the seasons change. If you are a seasonal allergy sufferer, here are some tips to treat allergies naturally:

- Get tested for allergies. This will help you determine what you are allergic to and the best way to treat them.
- Take allergy remedies that come from local sources. Eating small regular doses of locally produced honey or bee pollen can help your body build up a tolerance to pollen allergens and in turn reducing any reactions to pollen your body may have.
- Sometimes diet plays a role in controlling your allergy symptoms. According to some allergy specialists, if you suffer from weed pollen allergies, avoiding melon, banana, cucumber, sunflower seeds, chamomile and herbal supplements containing Echinacea, as these can make symptoms worse.
- Some experts recommend washing out allergens that get in your nose with saline nasal rinses. Using a neti pot is a good way to accomplish this. Over the counter saline nasal sprays are also helpful in rinsing out your sinuses. Both are very effective and economical ways to alleviate allergy symptoms.
- Clean your home regularly to reduce indoor allergens. Some people not only suffer from outdoor allergies but indoor ones as well.

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Green tip of the week:

Gardening for Wildlife

Spring is the perfect time to give your yard a “green” makeover. You can turn your lawn into a wonderful habitat for birds, butterflies, bees and other animals. Here are some tips for beautifying your garden the natural way:

Plant native plants. Read Richard Tallamy’s book *Bringing Nature Home* to learn why it is so important to grow native plants for wildlife. There are several local native garden sales going on this spring where you can pick up some local native plants.

- The Annual UUCSJS Native Plant Sale & Swap, 75 S. Pomona Road, Galloway, NJ. Go to www.uucsjs.org/2016-native-plant-swap-and-sale for order forms and information (order deadline April 1, 2016).
- Clemenson Farms Native Nursery, a WHOLESale nursery, hosts special retail sale days when the public is welcome. 2016 dates will be May 14, June 11, & September 17 (10 am - 2 pm). 108 Linwood Ave, Estell Manor, NJ 08319; 609-476-3903.

Give wildlife the elements they need. By providing food, shelter and cover, your yard will become wildlife friendly. Specifically by providing a bird bath, flowering plants, and native plants your yard will attract many birds, bees, and beneficial insects.

Involve children. Your yard is the perfect place to introduce nature to children. Involve them in planting seeds, watering plants and observing wildlife. Studies have shown that being outdoors helps reduce ADHD and obesity in children. It also helps children become more environmentally sensitive and caring for the outdoors.

Avoid chemical fertilizers. Chemical fertilizers and pesticides harm organisms that protect and enrich your yards. Composting is one of the practices that helps eliminate the need for chemicals. Also, planting native plants reduces the need for chemicals because these plants are better suited for the local environment and thus don’t need these chemicals to thrive.

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Green Tip of the Week:

Have you noticed that your lawn and certain plants in your gardens do not do so well in hot, dry weather? Many of the plants and grasses that cover our yards are non-native species and therefore need more water and fertilizer to survive the conditions of this area.

If you are taking on a new landscaping project, think about expanding gardens with native plantings and cutting back on large expanses of lawn. Planting native species of trees, shrubs and grasses will not only keep you from having to work so hard to maintain your yard; but you will also save money by not having to purchase chemical fertilizers. An added bonus: this effort will greatly benefit our indigenous wildlife and help to replace habitat that has been lost through development.

This tip is courtesy of the Task Force for a Sustainable Galloway.

For more information, call the Galloway Township Department of Community Education at 652-3700 x209 or email mlynch@gtnj.org



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Green Tip of the Week:

Frog populations have been declining at an alarming rate. You can help by eliminating the chemical atrazine. According to the Center for Biological Diversity, "Atrazine is a toxic pesticide that threatens wildlife and people across the country in some horrific ways – it's found in our water supply and can cause endocrine disruption, birth defects, fertility problems and certain cancers... Atrazine is the most commonly detected pesticide contaminant of ground, surface and drinking water. It is also extremely persistent in the environment- atrazine is still detectable in France even though its last application occurred 15 years ago."

Atrazine was banned in the EU including Switzerland, home of Syngenta, the company that manufactures it. The chemical is so widespread that almost 94% of drinking water in the United States has some degree of atrazine.*

Find out if you use the chemical on your property and dispose of it properly at the ACUA Hazardous Waste Collection, coming up 9/14/13, 10/12/13 and 11/2/13 from 9am – 2pm. Tell your family, friends and neighbors about it, and don't forget to tell your landscaper or property manager. Then visit <http://www.atrazinelovers.com/> for more information, or this website: <http://www.greeniacs.com/GreeniacsArticles/Food-and-Beverage/Atrazine.html>

Check out the Center for Biological Diversity and sign their petition to have atrazine banned by the EPA. Let's keep our water safe and protect our frog population. Think about it: frogs develop in water... so do we!

This tip is courtesy of the Task Force for a Sustainable Galloway.

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For information, email gogreengalloway@yahoo.com.

**Source: <http://www.truth-out.org/news/item/6558>*



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Green Tip of the Week:

You may have heard about the 'flight' of the bumblebee but what about the 'plight' of the bumblebee? You can go green and save the bees by choosing pesticides more carefully. The most widely used pesticide uses neonicotinoids. It works like nicotine, causing nervous system damage, paralysis, and death. Last month outside a store in Oregon, at least 25,000 bees were found dead in a parking lot, after dropping out of nearby trees which had been treated with neonicotinoid pesticide.

There are other factors causing colony collapse but bypassing pesticides is a simple act we can all do to help. Other ways to help include: buying organic produce, planting a variety of bee-friendly flowers, as well as leaving some ground undisturbed to provide shelter for bees to nest in.

Most plants rely on nature to move pollen around and without pollination, most flowering plants could not produce fruit or seeds. In an effort to alert consumers to the plight of the bees, a Rhode Island Whole Foods temporarily removed all the produce off its shelves that are grown with the help of pollinators like bees. About 1 in every 3 bites of food comes from pollination.

Check out <http://www.wholefoodsmarket.com/sharethebuzz> or

<http://www.haagendazs.com/Learn/HoneyBees/> or

<http://www.centerforfoodsafety.org> Bee Protective Campaign for more details.

This tip is courtesy of the Task Force for a Sustainable Galloway.

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Source: <http://www.outsideonline.com/news-from-the-field/25000-Bees-Dead-in-Oregon-.html>,

<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Neonicotinoid>



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